

RESOLUTION NO. 20060608-075

WHEREAS, the citizens of Austin value clean and healthy air; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin is dedicated to providing a clean environment for its citizens; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency adopted a new National Ambient Air Quality Standard for ozone (the 8-hour ozone standard), which provides for greater protection of public health and welfare than the pre-existing standard; and

WHEREAS, ozone levels in the Austin area exceeded the EPA's 8-hour ozone standard for each of the three-year averaging periods ending in 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2004; and

WHEREAS, experts believe that the ozone levels experienced in the Austin metropolitan area have adverse health effects, especially on children and individuals with respiratory problems; and

WHEREAS, as a proactive response to the region's elevated ozone levels, the 5-county Austin-Round Rock region entered into an Early Action Compact with the EPA, the purpose of which is to develop and implement emission control strategies sufficient to achieve the federal 8-hour ozone standard by 2007 and maintain it through 2012; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin is a signatory to the Early Action Compact (EAC); and

WHEREAS, under the EAC, the Austin-Round Rock region adopted and is implementing a number of control strategies to reduce ozone pollution, including, but not limited to: motor vehicle tailpipe emission testing; workplace-based programs to reduce commuting emissions; a heavy-duty vehicle idling restriction; and emissions reductions from local power plants; and

WHEREAS, as of April 30, 2006, 16 new coal-fired power units have been proposed to be built in Texas before 2010, increasing the state's electric generating capacity by more than 10%; and

WHEREAS, at least 8 of these proposed power units are in such close proximity to the Austin metropolitan area that they can be reasonably expected to exacerbate the region's already elevated levels of ozone pollution; and

WHEREAS, an analysis by the University of Texas at Austin concluded that "the ozone increases associated with the construction of [four of] the proposed coal-fired power plants in Central Texas could more than offset the reduction in ozone impacts associated with the recommended EAC control strategies on specific days;" and

WHEREAS, failure to meet the clean air goals of the EAC will mean that other sources of pollution in the Austin metropolitan area (such as individual vehicle owners, owners of vehicle fleets, small businesses, and Austin Energy's power plants) will have to shoulder an increased burden of reducing emissions to comply with EPA's ozone standard; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City hereby reaffirms its commitment to improving air quality in the Austin area.

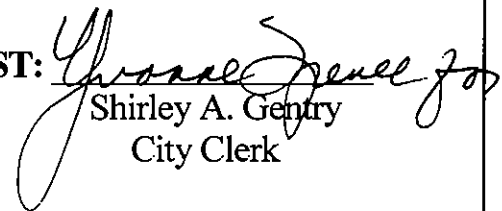
The City opposes the permitting of new coal-fired power generating facilities unless the TCEQ: (1) requires an analysis of the impacts of the proposed plants on downwind ozone pollution levels, and (2) requires mitigation measures such as cleaner fuels, emission reductions, local offsets, plant relocation and innovative technologies to ensure that the impacted areas' attainment goals remain intact.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the City has supported and will continue to support the efforts of the Early Action Compact Task Force, of which the City is a member, to ensure that new source of emissions not be allowed to cause a violation of any of the National Ambient Air Quality standards including ozone.

ADOPTED: June 8, 2006

ATTEST:


Shirley A. Gentry
City Clerk